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NEST 5-2 MORNING LINE FAVORITE IN FIELD OF 14 FOR 148TH LONGINES KENTUCKY OAKS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Monday, May 2, 2022) – Repole Stable, Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners and Michael House's Nest is the 5-2 morning-line favorite in a field of 14 3-year-old fillies and one also-eligible entered Monday for Friday's 148th running of the \$1.25 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) going 1 1/8 miles on the main track.

The Kentucky Oaks, one of seven graded stakes races on the 13-race program, will go as the 11th race with a 5:51 p.m. (all times Eastern) post time. First post Friday is 10:30 a.m.

The winner's share Friday will be \$767,250.

Trained by four-time Oaks winner **Todd Pletcher**, Nest has won four of five career starts and comes into Friday's race off an 8 1/4-length victory in the Ashland (GI) at Keeneland. **Irad Ortiz Jr.**, who has been aboard for all of her victories, has the mount Friday and will break from post four.

WinnGate Stables' undefeated **Kathleen O.** is the second choice at 7-2.

Trained by **Shug McGaughey**, who won the Oaks in 1993 with **Dispute**, Kathleen O. comes to Kentucky off daylight victories in the Davona Dale (GII) and Gulfstream Park Oaks.

Javier Castellano, who won the 2016 Oaks on **Cathryn Sophia**, has the mount and will break from post position 10.

L and N Racing and **Winchell Thoroughbreds'** undefeated Eclipse Award winner **Echo Zulu** is the third choice on the morning line at 4-1.

Trained by two-time Oaks winner **Steve Asmussen**, Echo Zulu is perfect in five starts with three of those victories coming last year in Grade 1 events that cemented honors as champion 2-year-old filly of 2021. In her 2022 debut, she held off Friday rival **Hidden Connection** by a nose in the Fair Grounds Oaks (GII).

Joel Rosario, who has been aboard for her past two victories, has the mount Friday and will break from post position seven.

Briland Farm's Secret Oath, runaway winner of the Martha Washington and Honeybee (GIII) at Oaklawn before finishing third against the boys in the Arkansas Derby (GI), is the fourth choice on the morning line at 6-1.

D. Wayne Lukas, the most recent trainer to win the race in consecutive years with **Open Mind** and **Seaside Attraction** in 1989-90, is seeking his fifth Oaks victory. **Luis Saez** will ride Secret Oath for the first time and break from post one.

Pletcher, who got his fourth Oaks victory last year with **Malathaat**, also will send out **Red Oak Stable's Goddess of Fire** and **KHK Racing's Shahama**.

Goddess of Fire (15-1), runner-up in the Gulfstream Park Oaks (GII) and Rachel Alexandra (GII) in her two most recent starts, will break from post five under **John Velazquez**. A two-time Oaks winner, Velazquez is seeking to become the first rider since **Eddie Arcaro** in 1951-53 to win the Oaks in consecutive years.

Shahama (15-1), undefeated in four starts and winner of the UAE Oaks (GIII) in her most recent outing, will be ridden for the first time by **Flavien Prat** and break from post 13.

Also looking to expand on his Oaks victory total is trainer **Brad Cox**.

Cox will saddle **Dawn and Ike Thrash's Turnerloose** (20-1) who will be ridden by **Manny Franco** and break from post 14. Cox won the Oaks in 2018 with **Monomoy Girl** and 2020 with **Shedaresthedevil**.

Three other riders will be trying to add another Oaks victory to their resumes.

Florent Geroux, who rode Monomoy Girl and Shedaresthedevil, will ride **Mr. and Mrs. Tsunebumi Yoshihara's Yuugiri** (30-1) for trainer **Rodolphe Brisset** and break from post position six.

Jose Ortiz, who won the 2019 Oaks on **Serengeti Empress**, will be aboard **Godolphin's Nostalgic** (15-1) for trainer **Bill Mott**. Nostalgic will break from post position two.

Rafael Bejarano, winner of the 2010 Oaks aboard **Blind Luck**, has the call on **Candy Raid** (30-1) for trainer **Keith Desormeaux** and will break from post position 12.

The field for the Longines Kentucky Oaks, with riders and morning-line odds from the rail out, is: Secret Oath (Saez, 6-1), Nostalgic (Jose Ortiz, 15-1), Hidden Connection (Rey Gutierrez, 20-1), Nest (Irad Ortiz Jr., 5-2), Goddess of Fire (Velazquez, 15-1), Yuugiri (Geroux, 30-1), Echo Zulu (Rosario, 4-1), **Venti Valentine** (Tyler Gaffalione, 20-1), Desert Dawn (Umberto Rispoli, 20-1), Kathleen O. (Castellano, 7-2), **Cocktail Moments** (Corey Lanerie, 30-1), Candy Raid (Bejarano, 30-1), Shahama (Prat, 15-1) and Turnerloose (Franco, 20-1). Also-Eligible: **Beguine** (Ricardo Santana Jr., 30-1). All starters will carry 121 pounds.

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